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LETTER DATED 6 AUGUST 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to transmit, herewith, the letter dated 5 August 1999 addressed to Your Excellency by His Excellency Dr. Kamal Kharrazi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, regarding the anniversary of the killing by Taliban forces of the Iranian diplomats and the correspondent of the Islamic Republic News Agency at the Consulate-General of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Mazar-e-Sharif (see annex).

It would be appreciated if this letter and its annex were circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Hadi NEJAD-HOSSEINIAN
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex

Letter dated 5 August 1999 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran addressed to the Secretary-General

You are no doubt aware that one year has elapsed since the horrendous crime of the Taliban group in capturing the Consulate-General of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Mazar-e-Sharif and killing eight Iranian diplomats and one journalist there. The outrage duly expressed by the international community, condemning the Taliban as the perpetrators of these killings, and particularly the special attention given to this tragic event by the United Nations as embodied in Security Council resolutions 1193 (1998) and 1214 (1998) laid the political, legal and international groundwork for the investigation of the issue, identification and prosecution of those responsible for the murders.

The statement of the Ministerial Meeting of the "Six plus Two" Group held in New York on 21 September 1998, which was reconfirmed in the Declaration adopted by the Meeting of the Deputy Foreign Ministers of the "Six plus Two" Group in Tashkent on 19 July 1999, does specifically demand that the Taliban abide by the will of the international community in identifying, prosecuting and punishing those responsible for and those who were otherwise accomplices in the killing of the Iranian diplomats and journalist.

Regrettably, these international measures as well as the efforts of your Special Envoy on Afghanistan, His Excellency Ambassador Lakhdar Brahimi, have been met with the total disregard of the Taliban. Similarly, the contacts which were made, however limited, by the representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran with the Taliban with a view to persuading them to heed the wishes of the international community forthwith and to identify, prosecute and punish those responsible have borne no fruit.

The Taliban's contempt for the rules and principles of international law and for the internationally recognized norms as well as their engagement in cruel and inhumane acts require particular attention on the part of the international community, with a view to inducing them to change their behaviour and to heed the call by the international community as articulated in Security Council and General Assembly resolutions as well as the declarations adopted by the Group of "Six plus Two".

I am confident that a pronouncement by Your Excellency, as the Secretary-General of the United Nations and, in fact, the spokesman for the whole international community, on the occasion of the anniversary of this tragedy in

Mazar-e-Sharif would underscore the imperative of the inviolability of diplomatic premises and the protection of their staff, and thereby dispel the false notion of the Taliban that the rules and principles of international law including the United Nations resolutions can be disregarded with impunity.

(Signed) Dr. Kamal KHARRAZI
Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Islamic Republic of Iran